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THE OLD WHITE HAT—AND THE OLD GREY MARE.

(Concluded from Page 662.)

Adam having finished his narrative, Clinch proceeded to question him upon the more recent occurrences of his life, and finding his recollection much impaired upon these points, he very unceremoniously gave him his dismissal, but not before Chilvers had slipped something into his hand. Here's a pretty rascal, said the man of law—he has heard that we wanted evidence, and has trumped up this circumstantial tale in the hope of a reward; but did you observe how neatly I detected the old rogue when I began to cross question him? Will any one believe that he could so minutely detail an occurrence of sixty or seventy years ago, in which, by his own account, he was no way interested, when he cannot recollect much more recent and important particulars of his own life? The importance of these matters, said Chilvers, is not to be considered abstractedly but relatively: at the time of poor Polly's death, Adam had never witnessed any exhibition more solemn and affecting; probably had never been present at the death of a large animal. You seem to forget that the tablet to the memory, like certain stones, though sufficiently soft at first to receive deep and distinct impressions, hardens with age; and that this very induration fixes and indelibly preserves the characters first engraved, while it prevents any future incisions, unless of a very superficial and evanescent nature. You may scratch or write upon it, and this answers the temporary wants of age, but you can no longer chisel or stamp any durable impress upon its stubborn substance. This seeming inconsistency is, in my opinion, a forcible confirmation of Old Adam's veracity. A jury won't think so, retorted Clinch, and that's the only thing to look to.

I have given this dialogue, and old Adam Wright's examination circumstantially, because every particular is deeply fixed in my own recollection, by the fatal results of which the affair was speedily productive. Chilvers, as I have mentioned, had been ill when he sallied forth to read the placard announcing the shutting up of the foot-path. Upon that occasion, he got wet—he sat some time at Mr. Clinch's: his complaint, which was the gout, was driven into his stomach—and in spite of unmediate medical advice, and the unremitted self-devotion of his wife, who never quitted his side, he expired in ten days. Death-bed descriptions are productive of no good to counteract their painful details; they prove nothing,—for whatever may be gained in the sincerity of the dying person, is balanced by the diseased state which the mind generally participates with the body. A man's opinions are worth nothing unless they emanate from a vigorous intellect and sound frame, uninfluenced by immediate hopes or fears. Suffice it to say, that Chilvers died as he had lived, a philanthropist and a philosopher.

After the melancholy ceremonies of the funeral, which I took upon myself to direct, I accompanied my wife to the cottage, where we meant to reside for some little time, to offer our consolations to his relict, now a second time a widow. I have never been more forcibly impressed with the vanity of human learning, and the vain glory of philosophy, than in the instance of this uneducated female, who from the innate principle, or instinct of religion, although utterly ignorant of all theological points, possessed a mastery over her mind, and a conso-

lation under afflictions, which the most profound adept in the schools of worldly wisdom would in vain attempt to rival. Conscious that the death of her husband was a dispensation of Providence, under which it was perhaps guilty to repine, she set resolutely about the suppression of her grief, beginning by carefully locking up and concealing all those articles of his dress and daily use which, by recalling him suddenly and forcibly to her recollection, might upset her pious resolutions; so that, upon our arrival, we found her in a frame of mind much more calm and resigned than we had anticipated. Though Chilvers never killed a bird or caught a fish in his life, he had a favourite spaniel, called Juno, almost as inseparable a companion as his old white hat,—the partaker of his morning rambles, and the invariable residuary of his crusts at tea-time. This faithful animal his widow could not resolve to dismiss; but, with this exception, she imagined she had so disposed of every personal memorial, as to be secure from too frequent a renewal of her griefs by the sight of external objects. She was, however, mistaken. We were all seated in the parlour, myself and my wife endeavouring to divert the widow's thoughts from the past, by directing them to the future management of her little girl, and flattering ourselves that we had infused into her mind a more than usual serenity, when our attention was aroused by a barking and laughing without; the door was thrown open, and in scampered Juno, with the old white hat tied upon her head, while little Fanny followed, shouting behind, delighted with the success of her frolic.—Oh, Fanny! Fanny! cried the agonised mother; why did they suffer ——she could not utter a word more; but, overcome by her feelings, rushed out of the room, and locked herself into her chamber. The child, it seems, had seized the old white hat in the first confusion of her father's death, and concealed it in a closet of the nursery, whence she had now withdrawn it to fasten upon Juno's head, quite unconscious of the distress she was preparing. Young as she was, I endeavoured to impress upon her mind the loss of her papa, for so she always called him, and the necessity of refraining from all mention of his name, or allusion to his death, in the presence of her mother. She appeared to understand, and promised to obey my directions. Fortified and composed by the consolations she never failed to draw from her solitary religious exercises, the widow shortly returned to the parlour, and a tranquillity, though somewhat embarrassed, was again established in our little circle; when Fanny, ready to burst with the possession of what she considered a mystery, kept hovering about her mother; and, at last, taking her hand, and looking up in her face with an affectionate importance, she lisped out hesitatingly, I know something: Papa's dead, but I must'nt tell you, because it's a great secret, and you'll be angry if I do. The poor widow hid her face in the handkerchief with one hand, and with the other covered the child's mouth, as if to silence her; but as the little urchin seemed disposed to expostulate, I took her by the hand, led her out of the room, and directed the maid to put her to bed.

On re-entering the parlour, I once more found the mother in a state of comparative serenity, and calculated on passing the evening without further outrage to her feelings. The child was asleep—the old white hat was locked up, and it was settled that after tea I was to read a sermon, which I had selected for the purpose, as the best adapted to pour balm and peace into her wounded bosom. The equipage was already set out, and I recalled that simple but exquisite picture of fire-side enjoyment, which Chilvers was so fond of quoting:

> The hearth was swept—the fire was bright,
> The kettle on for tea, &c.

when my attention was called to Juno, who, instead of basking leisurely before the fire, as was her wont, kept searching round the room, smelling to

every individual, and occasionally planting herself close to the door, with an earnest air, as if expecting the arrival of some one else. After waiting some time, she betook herself to the rug, with an appearance of disappointment, when she presently started with a short bark and expression of alacrity towards the door:—It was Patty entering with the urn. Now, if Juno had been in a frame of mind to be easily pleased, she could not have muttered such a discontented growl at the sight of Patty, whose fair complexion, auburn hair, red arms, and somewhat substantial figure, constituted her a pleasing specimen of the Rural English, or rather Saxon beauty: while her manner and attire rendered her a worthy counterpart to Milton's "neat handed Phillis." Juno, however, who had no eyes except for her poor master, whom she was never to see more, returned grumbling to the rug. Exactly the same eager excitement, and surly disappointment occurred, when the maid returned with the toast; but the rug, instead of contenting herself with the rug upon this occasion, stood before her mistress, looking wistfully in her face, and whined, as if inquiring for her master. I exchanged glances with my wife, and saw at once that we mutually understood what was passing in Juno's mind, as well as her mistress's. Poor widowed sufferer! I saw her nostrils dilating, the muscles of her mouth working, and her eyes filling, though, by a resolute effort at self-command, she was striving to suppress and swallow down the rising emotion. She might, perhaps, have succeeded, but Juno, after again listening some time at the door, while a dead silence reigned in the chamber, finally placed herself before her mistress, and set up the most dismal and shocking howl I ever heard. My heart sank within me, as if a cold hand had been dragging it down, and I felt my eyes suffused. My wife had turned to the window to hide her emotion, for I perceived that she was weeping; and notwithstanding the intensity of my feelings, so rapid and incongruous are our thoughts, that I found a moment for mentally condemning the absurd fashion of reticules, as she had no handkerchief, and was wiping her eyes with the petticoat of Fanny's doll, which had been left in the window seat. But who shall describe the agony of the widow? The gush of passion overpowered all the barriers of resolution and religion,—the woman predominated over the Christian, and her emotions flowed more vehemently from the previous controul to which they had been subjected. Convulsive and hysterical sobs for some time choaked her utterance, and when she was able to articulate, as if anxious to excuse the violence of her grief by the virtues of its object, she turned towards me, and exclaimed: Was'nt he a kind creature—every body loved him, and even Juno, you see, cannot forget him. O! Sir, you don't know half the kind, generous, and charitable things he did in private. Her feelings again overpowered her; she sank her head upon Juno's, who by this time had leaped into her lap, and I shall never forget her woe-stricken look when she raised it, and sobbed out—Pshu! where is my handkerchief—my tears are blotting the paper;—when she sobbed out—

Gentle reader, forgive me; my heart and my eyes are both too full; I cannot write a word more.

ADAM BLAIR.

[Continued from Page 265.]

Our next quotation shall be the scene before the Presbytery, and we must give it entire:—

"When the clergymen composing the Presbytery found themselves assembled that day, it would have been evident to any one who might have been present, that their minds were occupied with something very different from the ordinary routine of their ecclesiastical business. The clerk read his minutes without being listened to by any body: and while many little matters were being arranged in the usual manner, among the usual

functionaries, the different members of the court were seen forming themselves into knots, and whispering together low and anxiously in various corners of the Chapter-house. At length one of the members, a tall, thin, elderly person, of very formal aspect, moved that the court should be cleared, as he had to call the attention of his brethren to a subject, which, in its present state, ought to be discussed with closed doors.

"When this clergyman, by name Stevenston, was satisfied that all strangers had retired, he addressed the chair in a long and elaborate speech, for the tenor of which almost all who heard him were sufficiently prepared before he opened his lips. He expatiated at great length on his own unwillingness at all times to open his ears to scandal, more particularly against the character of any of his hitherto respected brethren;—explained, however, that, under certain circumstances, it was every man's duty to overcome his private feelings;—and then entered into a serious, circumstantial detail of the many rumours which had been for some time afloat, concerning the conduct of Mr. Blair of Cross-Meikle. He concluded with moving a string of resolutions, which he held written out on a card in his hand—the general purport of which was, that the scandal concerning this member of their court had already amounted to what, in the ecclesiastical phraseology of Scotland, goes under the name of a *Fama Clamosa*; and that, therefore, it was the bounden duty of the Presbytery to take up the matter *quoad primum*, and appoint a committee, with powers to commence a *precognition*—and that such and such persons ought to constitute the committee in question. His motion was instantly seconded by another person on the same side of the house, who, however, in doing so, expressed his own firm belief that there was no foundation whatever for the foul allegations too publicly circulated against Mr. Blair, and that, on a proper investigation, (which, for the sake of Mr. Blair himself, ought to take place without any further delay,) it would become manifest to all, that a few casual imprudencies, misinterpreted by the malicious, were all that could be laid to his charge. He concluded with a eulogium on Mr. Blair's previous character and conduct, both of which, he said, had always been regarded with deepest respect, even by those who differed most widely from him in opinion as to matters of inferior moment, and by none more so than himself.

"When this speaker sat down, there ensued a pause of some moments, during which, those on the opposite side of the room (the same among whom Mr. Blair himself usually sat) were seen consulting among themselves, as if anxious, and yet hesitating, to make some reply. Dr. Muir, who happened to be the Moderator of the Presbytery, and of course had his seat apart from any of the other clergymen, continued for some time looking towards them, and at last he rose up, and requested one of their number to relieve him, for a moment, from the duties of the chair.

"As soon as he had quitted the desk, the old man, still standing in the open space in the centre of the room, threw his eyes eagerly round him, and began to speak of the matter which had been brought before their notice, characterizing as rash and imprudent, in the highest degree, the conduct of those who had broached such a subject in the absence of the person most immediately concerned in it, and fervently expressing his own utter contempt of the rumours they had heard of, and his most sincere conviction, for such it was that the pure and stainless character of Mr. Blair had been assailed in consequence of nothing but the malice of one individual, whose name need only be mentioned in order to satisfy the Presbytery with how much caution they ought to proceed upon this occasion. He then sunk into a lower but not a less serious tone, and—after desiring his brethren, with the authority which years and superior talents alone can bestow, to banish all thoughts of party in considering an assault which might have been made

with equal success, as well as, he firmly believed, with equal justice, against any one of all who heard him—the old man proceeded to relate the substance of the conversation he had himself held with Mr. Blair the night before he left Cross-Meikle, and the solemn denial of the alleged guilt which he had then received from the lips of his young friend. Dr. Muir himself felt, as he went on, that what he said was producing a powerful effect, and he therefore opened himself more and more freely, and reviewing the whole course of Adam Blair's existence, dared any one present to avow his belief, that even if he had been capable of offending in the manner imputed to him, he could have been so of telling a deliberate and an uncalled-for LIE. 'Sirs,' said he, 'I put to all of you, whether you do not feel and know that Adam Blair is innocent; and is it thus, that while we are ourselves convinced of his innocence, we are rashly, hastily, sinfully to injure our brother, by countenancing the clamours of the ignorant, and the malicious, and the ungodly, in his absence? Would to God that he were present with us this day, that he might have done for himself effectually, what a feeble old man has rather the will than the power to do for him!'

"Dr. Muir was speaking fervently in this strain, and the visible emotion of a man who generally controlled and concealed his more ardent feelings, was kindling even the coldest who listened into the same congenial warmth, when the door of the Chapter-house opened, and in walked Adam Blair himself. Every eye being fixed stedfastly upon the impassioned speaker, the entrance of a stranger was not for a few moments observed by a single person there; and indeed Dr. Muir himself never suspected what had happened, until the pale and altered man was standing at the distance of three or four paces right in front of him. He stopped in the midst of the sentence, and gazed for a moment in silence, first upon him, and then upon the audience—and then suddenly resuming all the fervour of his tone, said these words, 'I thank my GOD!—Adam Blair, speak, look up, let them hear your voice. Speak solemnly, in the hearing of GOD and your brethren,—Adam, are you guilty, or not guilty of this uncleanness?'

"The unhappy Blair, laying his hand upon his breast, answered quickly and clearly, 'Call me no more your brother—I am a fallen man—I am guilty.'

"Every pulse shook beneath the tone of that voice—but Dr. Muir groaned aloud, ere he made answer. 'Fallen, indeed, Adam Blair,—woe is me—doubly, trebly fallen! Do you remember the words you said to me when I spake with you in private?'

"'I do—and they were true. *Then* I deceived not you, but myself. *Now*, no one is deceived.'

"The old man covered his face with his hands, and flung himself backwards upon his seat, while all the rest continued silent, speechless, staring upon the countenance of Blair.

"It was he himself who broke once more the silence of their assembly: 'I call you no longer my brethren—let me still call you, though unworthy, my friends: let me still partake your prayers.—Pray for me;—I dare not pray for myself. The GOD that hath abandoned me will hear your prayers.'

"At these words Dr. Muir uncovered his face, and fixing his eyes once more on the unfortunate, continued, for some moments, to regard him in silence, like all the rest. A big tear rolled over his cheeks, but he brushed it hastily away ere he said, 'Adam Blair, you have been ill. You have been ill in the body. But a few days ago your hair was black, and now it is as gray as mine; your cheek is white, your strength is gone.' He started to his feet as he continued—'Our brother has been visited with much sickness. Perchance his mind also has been shaken.'

"'It has, it has,' muttered several voices.

"Mr. Blair looked all around him, and, for the first time, the water stood in his eye, as he replied, 'Body and mind have been shaken, but it is not

as you would too kindly persuade yourselves. Oh, sirs!—I have spoken the truth. I came hither to speak it. What hope of peace or mercy could I have until I had spoken the truth, and resigned the office into the hands of God's servants?—I do now resign it. —My ancestors were peasants, and I return to their lot—would I were worthy of them! Once more, I demand your prayers. Refuse not my parting request.'"

"The whole assembly remained, once more, fixed in silence. Dr. Muir, still erect in front of Blair, surveyed them all round and round; and then saying, 'Brethren, I read your thoughts,' fell down upon his knees. They all knelt at the same moment; and Blair, weeping like an infant, knelt also in the midst of them, and stooped his forehead to the dust."

We find that we can afford only one short extract more:—

"Mr Blair discharged the duty bequeathed to him by this venerable man's parting breath, amidst a numerous assemblage of the neighbouring gentry, and of the whole members of the Presbytery, to which the parishes of Cambuslee and Cross-Meikle belonged. He received their salutations with modesty, but without any apparent awkwardness: and parting from them at the church-yard, walked home to his cottage.

"His daughter and he were sitting together quietly by the fireside the same evening, when a knock came to the door. Sarah rose and opened it, and in a few moments, the cottage was quite filled with the same clergymen who had been present at the funeral. Mr. Blair stood up to receive them; but he had not time to ask them the purpose of their visit ere the eldest of those who had come, addressed him in these words:—

"'Mr. Blair, your brethren have come to speak with you on a very solemn subject; but there is no occasion why your daughter should not hear what we have to say. It appears that our departed father, Dr. Muir, had expressed a strong wish, that you, being reinstated in the ministry, should succeed him at Cambuslee,—and that the family who have the patronage of that parish, were exceedingly anxious that his dying request to this effect might be complied with. You, however, have declined to accede to their wishes. We, your brethren, have this day held a conference with the family at Semplehaugh, and another arrangement is now proposed to you by them through us. If Mr. Jamieson becomes Minister of Cambuslee, will you return to your own old place?—Will you once more set your hand to God's work here at Cross-Meikle?'

"Mr. Blair's daughter turned aside and wept when she heard these words; but he himself stood for a moment in silence before them. It was then that John Maxwell, who had been bedrid for three years, was borne in a chair into the midst of the assembly, and said, 'Mr. Blair, we, the Elders of Cross-Meikle, are all present. We are all of the same mind. Oh, Sir, tear not! we have all witnessed the purification! let me not die until I have seen you once more in your father's place.'

"The tears at length gushed over a face that had been long too calm for tears; and Mr. Blair, altogether overpowered, submitted himself to the will of his brethren. His friends perceived that he would fain be left alone, and they all departed. Sarah rushed into his arms and wept, but not bitterly.

"A moment afterwards she also withdrew, and Blair was left alone to meditate upon his pillow concerning all these things, and concerning more than these."

THE LOLLARDS

About two years since a tale appeared under the title of "*The Martyr*;" the plan was interesting, and many passages displayed great power of language, particularly the death of a pious Missionary in the deserts of Arabia. But on the whole the work was rather a promise of something than attractive in itself. The pro-

mise thus held out has been fulfilled in another novel, which has just appeared from the same pen under the title of "The Lollards."

This tale opens with the imprisonment of the celebrated Lord Cobham in the Tower of London;—he escapes, and seeks concealment in Wales. His son Edward has been affianced to Matilda, the daughter of a wealthy knight, Sir Thomas Venables, who resides in the village of Charing (Charing Cross.) In consequence of the horror inspired by Lord Cobham's being known to be a Lollard, the match is broken off, and Matilda is, in despite of her constant affection, commanded to consider Octavius, the heir of Earl Powis, as her future husband. Edward, with his sister Alice, find an asylum with Mr. Whittington, brother to Sir Richard a Member of Parliament, engaged in attempting to procure what was then the favourite nostrum for curing the ills of the state—a resumption of church grants; and prosecuting this plan, he unfolds to us the alleged abuses and excesses of that day from ancient records, which at once astonish by the resemblance the complaints bear to those of the present time, and by the enormous disparity between the pecuniary amount of the charges at the two periods in which the complaints were and are founded. The English political reformer receives a visit from a religious reformer, in the person of the celebrated John Huss, from Bohemia, who is described as coming to England to mitigate the distress of his friend Lord Cobham, by taking Alice with him to Prague, where it is presumed she will find a more perfect protection than the offspring of Lord Cobham can calculate upon enjoying in England. Huss visits Lord Cobham in Wales. On the way he is exposed to fearful perils, and these bring on the scene a Welsh *Red hand*, or hired assassin, who afterwards acts a very conspicuous part. From Wales the Bohemian passes to London, which is then brought before us in its ancient state, with the circumstances formerly attendant on travelling in England. Edward and Alice accompany Huss to Prague. The first is there taught the art of printing, and returns to England; but Alice accompanies her protector to Constance, where he is cited before the Council. The proceedings of that Council, and the condemnation and death of Huss, are then described; and in consequence of the latter event, Alice finds herself a destitute stranger in a foreign land. She passes through France in male attire, assisted by De Marle, a young Frenchman, who had been smitten with her charms as a female; whose company now, and the love of a Lady D'Aumont, place her in a very embarrassing situation, and repeatedly endanger the discovery of her sex. The confusion consequent on the battle of Agincourt parts Alice from the mistaken lady, and alone and on foot she journies to Agincourt. In the neighbourhood of the field of battle she finds De Marle, who had been wounded in the fight and taken prisoner by Octavius Powis, whose generosity saves him from the general slaughter of the prisoners. Octavius discovers the sex of Alice, and though engaged to Matilda, becomes her lover. They pass at Dover at the moment when the Emperor Sigismund, whose perfidy had accomplished the destruction of Huss, arrives to visit his brother of England. The curious circumstances attendant on the disembarkation are detailed; and passing through London, Alice again takes up her abode with Mr. Whittington in Leicestershire. In the mean time Edward, as the professor of an art now no longer known, that of *Oneiromancy*, has gained access to Matilda, and attempted to withdraw her from the house of her father; but, baffled in his design, the attempt causes her to be shut up in the convent of Black Nuns. Octavius suddenly learns that an important service rendered to the state has given his father wealth and power; and considering himself released from his previous engagements, he hastens to share his good fortunes with Alice, and entreats her to become his wife.

The generous and delicate attentions of De Marle had made an impression on the heart of Alice, rather unfavourable to the hopes of Octavius; but while the latter is still pressing his suit, Edward arrives from Wales, with news that Lord Cobham has been taken,—betrayed to his enemies by Earl Powis. The parties are plunged in great affliction. Edward and Octavius attempt to move Chichely, Archbishop of Canterbury, to intercede for mercy, but without effect. Edward seeks an entrance at Lambeth, but is denied. He scales the garden wall, resolved if possible to see Chichely, and there accidentally meets with Matilda, who had been summoned there to receive the last injunctions of her dying father. Edward's conduct is thought most culpable, as it is presumed that this is the time which he has chosen to press his forbidden suit with her. That supposed offence and the indiscreet language which he holds to the Archbishop on the subject of Lord Cobham's persecution, sends him to the Lollard's tower at Lambeth House. He is afterwards accused of sorcery, in consequence of some specimens of printing being traced to him. It is arranged that the case shall be decided by the King in person; and Earl Powis, the accuser, with Edward and most of the principal personages of the tale, pass into France, in order to render themselves at the field *De la Chatte*, where King Henry is just about to meet Queen Isabella, the wife of Charles the Sixth of France, and her daughter, the Princess Katherine, his future queen. In the splendid pavilion in which this their first meeting took place, (of which a very circumstantial account is given) the offences of the *dramatis personæ* of the tale are brought to a conclusion by means of the interference of the royal personages we have named. On the way Octavius is assassinated. Circumstances lead Earl Powis, who pursues the son as fiercely as he had done the father, to accuse Edward of the murder. It is afterwards proved that the fury of Powis against the family of Cobham, had made himself the direct though unintentional cause of his son's end; and madness and death requite his sordid ambition. Edward repels the charges against him; the guilt of the real offender is proved; the son of Lord Cobham is now raised to his father's rank; and he and De Marle become the husbands of Matilda and Alice.

The following description of an English dinner of that age will shew the taste in which the work is written:

Mr. Whittington and Edward Cobham "proceeded from '*the Way to Reading*, by *St. Giles's in the Fields*,' which was in 1415 as much in the fields as Hornsey is now. They proceeded by the meadow, then free from every sort of building, on which the street called Long Acre has since been built, and turning to the right, they passed over part of the ground which forms Drury Lane, and descended from Ivy Bridge, in the Strand. This was a small erection thrown over a running water, (inferior in magnitude to Fleet Ditch,) which passed from north to south, and here made its way to the Thames. Mr. Whittington, determined to call on his brother Sir Richard, went to his house, which stood in the Strand, about half a mile nearer Charing than Ivy Bridge. It was his intention to remain a few hours with his relation; but Sir Richard, who was too much connected with men in power, to wish for an intimacy with the son of a proscribed Lollard, excused himself from remaining at home, as he had an engagement for that morning, being expected to attend the swearing in of the Lord Mayor. He received them courteously in a room which looked on an extensive garden in the rear of the house, beyond which it commanded the Convent Garden, now named Covent Garden, then enclosed with a wall, and extending from the lane, by which Edward and his friend had passed into the Strand to St. Martin's church.

"It was eleven o'clock, and Sir Richard had taken the precaution of dining before he left his home. His bre-

ther had intended to get to him in time to sit down with him, but being later than he had expected, he was not sorry to find the remains of an elegant dinner still on table. That which most particularly captivated the old gentleman was the appearance of part of a sea-hog, or porpus, which at that period enjoyed a reputation quite as high as salmon or turbot can pretend to now. A dish of seal's flesh stood near it, and besides roast beef, a peacock just served up, which the knight had not had time to attack, smoked on the well-supplied board, which was further garnished with custards, both cold and hot, together with a jug of ale, a flask of Gascony wine, and a bowl of Ipocras.

"'I trow, my worthy brother,' said Whittington, 'looked for some of his city compatriots to dine with him to-day, seeing he has provided so much more than might have sufficed for his own people. My appetite is somewhat keen, and being fond of fish I purposed asking for a baconed herring, as if I had been at home, but truly this sea hog is more dainty fare. Wilt have a platter full? 'Tis passing good, and I perceive the sauce is that I like with dolphin, well stored with oysters.'

"Edward declined eating any.

"'Take you some seal, then, which, after the porpus, is the most delicate fish that swims, which have good substance. These are luxuries we of the country seldom can enjoy, for if we get fish of the sea, or oysters in Leicestershire, being so long journeying, they either gain a flavour which is not delicious, or lose that which should belong to them. Therefore, to taste such things a week newer than we can have them brought to us from London, is no mean treat, but even as good to me as a slice from one of my finest muttons, killed fresh from the pasture, is to my brother.'

"Pressed to eat by Mr. Whittington, Edward took a small part of the peacock. His friend made an excellent meal on the porpus, after which Whittington invited Edward to accompany him to Sir Richard's *skittle-court*.

"The modern medical proverb, 'After dinner rest awhile,' had not then gained much credit, and Whittington having eaten with good appetite, conceived a little exercise to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of health. He, therefore to finish his flask of Gascony, courted the amusement of *skittles*, which at that period was not discountenanced by those who prided themselves on polite accomplishments.

"But the game of skittles, as then played, differed essentially from that which constitutes the amusement of the industrious classes of the present day. The *skittle-court* of Sir Richard was a square enclosure, in the centre of which a large frame of the same shape was laid down. About a foot within this frame, the pins were ranged in three rows. These, ludicrous as it must sound, represented the three Branches of the British Constitution, King, Lords, and Commons. Such were the names given to the *skittles*, and in knocking them down, they counted according to their rank. The King pin still retains its name and station, and part but not all of its original glory in the modern game. It stood in the centre, decorated with the representation of a crown, and was three inches taller than the four corner *skittles*, nobles as they were called, which surpassed in the same degree the Commons, or *skittles* placed at the edge of the frame between the corners. The nobles had small round heads—the commons lacking such distinctions. Whenever the king fell the player scored five. Each noble contributed three towards his game; the commoner gave but two.

"'I judge,' said the brother of the proprietor, 'you have been too much occupied with other studies to be a proficient in the healthful game of *skittles*. But I will soon instruct you. Throw not up to the *skittles*, but let your bowl fall on the outer frame, and bound forward to one of the nobles, which shall carry the king, and, perchance, one or more of the commons; but I can tell you all in two

goodly verses which I made when I was young, and which, both for sound and sense, were thought not unworthy of being oft rehearsed:

'Bowl strong, the frame withouten hit,
and miss the same within;
'The King, four Lords, and Commons four,
the game will quickly bring.'

"He then commenced, and his first throw brought him thirteen, as the king, two lords, and one commoner bowed 'beneath his sturdy stroke.' This success reminded him of his youthful dexterity, raised the old gentleman's spirits, if it did not contribute to increase his health, and he soon triumphed over his heedless adversary, who found it no easy task to fall in with the humour of his eccentric friend, so far as to take a part in this diversion."

ON THE ORIGIN AND CELEBRATION OF EASTER.

(From the "New Monthly Magazine.")

THERE are but few, even in the number of those who have oftenest participated in the commemoration of Easter, that are acquainted with the origin and early observances of that festival. We will therefore cast a glance backwards at the ways of our Christian ancestors; rather with a view to satisfy the cravings of human inquisitiveness, than with any intent to point out those to obloquy, whose zeal, perseverance, and constancy, have bequeathed to us the rich legacy of a faith, the practices and promises of which enhance human happiness, and afford us a sublunary foretaste of "the bliss immortal."

The festival of Easter took its birth from the Paschal feast of the Jews: for the first Christians retained many of the Mosaic customs and celebrations, and in the sequel, either abolished them altogether, or rendered them typical of some remarkable occurrence in the annals of their religion. In this way they came to adopt the Paschal feast of the Jews, in the first instance, with all its customary observances, little careful of observing it as a commemoration of the resurrection of their Saviour. The Jews held this feast on the 14th day of the month "Nisan:" and the Eastern Christians began by celebrating it, conjointly with their rivals, on the same day. The Western Church, however, did not follow their example in the day of its appointment: but kept this festival on the Sunday immediately succeeding the full moon of the Vernal Equinox, using a tradition of the apostles Peter and Paul as their authority for this variation. These two churches, therefore, observed the Easter feast at two different periods: but neither entered the lists against the other until Pius, Bishop of Rome, took occasion to ordain that it should be kept on a Sunday throughout Christendom. Anticetas, his successor, rigidly enforced this ordinance: and Victor, the Roman Bishop, afterwards held a synod at Rome, which decreed, that the Paschal feast should never be kept in correspondence with the Jewish observance, but should always be celebrated on a Sunday. The Bishops of the Western churches, however, having refused to conform with the synodical ordinance, were denounced in excommunication by Victor; but the papistical ban was subsequently recalled, and the Eastern Christians continued in the practice of siding with the Jews in the keeping of this festival. The General Assembly of the Church at Nice, in 325, ultimately decreed, that Easter should be held on the first Sunday after the full moon of the spring by the whole of Christendom. And its celebration now received another character. The Paschal feast of the Jews, in commemoration of the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt, was henceforward to be converted into a memorial of Christ's resurrection, as that event was known to have taken place on a Sunday; and it was to be observed also in the spring, as at this season the resurrection had taken place, though the precise day of its occurrence had not been handed down. From these circumstances we are natu-

rally led to infer, that the early Christians little concerned themselves about the resurrection itself in their paschal festival; otherwise, the recollection of the exact day in the year of that memorable event would scarcely have been lost.

The decree of the council was generally recognized through the Christian world; and the few who persisted in adhering to the Jewish custom, were called the "Quartodecimani." With a view to prevent any mistake in the future celebration of Easter, the Vernal Equinox was fixed for the 21st of March, although it does not always fall on this day according to astronomical computation.

The derivation of our English name of "Easter," we are warranted in tracing back to our Saxon ancestors, who called this feast the "Oster fest;"—the word "Ost," of old, signifying the East, in which quarter the sun rises; and being the more suitable a designation, since Scripture acquaints us, that our Saviour "very early in the morning, when it was yet dark, had risen from the grave." Hence it became a common custom on Easter-day to rise before the sun, which an old tradition made our ancestors believe was used to dance on that morning. The early Christians, indeed, were accustomed to devote the night preceding it to prayer and thanksgivings until the time of cock-crow, which they conceived to be the moment of Christ's resurrection. And when these nocturnal observances fell into disuse, it became the custom to rise early and spend the morning in pious devotions, and walking in the fields; and the usual salutation, which even now prevails in the Greek church, was "*Jesus Christ is risen*;" to which the person accosted replied, "*The Lord is risen indeed*." This was accompanied by the interchange of "Paschal eggs," stained with various colours, and devices emblematic of the resurrection; they are referred to in the following form of benediction contained in the Ritual of Pope Paul the Fifth, "made for the use of England, Ireland, and Scotland." It runs in these words: "Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, this thy creature of *eggs*, that it may become a wholesome sustenance to thy faithful servants, eating it in thankfulness to thee, on account of the *Resurrection* of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee, &c." Dr. Chandler in his Eastern travels, received from the Greeks "presents of coloured eggs, and cakes of Easter bread:" from which last our custom of cross-buns on Good Friday probably arose.

The usage of interchanging eggs, at this season has been referred for its origin to the egg games of the Romans, which they celebrated at the time of our Easter, when they ran races in an oval, egg-shaped ring, and the victor received eggs as his prize. These games were instituted in honour of Castor and Pollux, whom fabulists relate to have come forth from an *egg*, deposited by Leda after Jupiter had visited her in the shape of a swan. Others allege that the custom was borrowed from the Jews, who, at their passover, set on the table two unleavened cakes, and two pieces of the lamb; to this they added some small fishes, because of the Leviathan; a *hard egg*, because of the bird Ziz; and some meal, because of the Behemoth. We will only add in reference to this custom, that Ray has recorded an old proverb, running—"I'll warrant you for an egg at Easter:" which points at the descent of this custom to later times.

Amongst the other symbols of the Easter season, it was formerly customary for work to cease and servants to be at liberty; and this resembled the practice of the early Christians, who set apart the whole week after Easter, in order that they might praise and glorify God for the Redeemer's resurrection. But without detaining the reader farther, we must refer him at once to a popular work*, for some curious memorials of the public shows, games, &c. by which this season was distinguished by our forefathers.

It is well known that *fire* has in the

* Brand's Antiquities of the Common People.

infancy of most nations been held in high esteem; and among some of them, even accounted worthy of veneration. Religion, having ever been used as the vehicle and coverlid to superstition, and fire and water having been looked upon as the most efficient means of purification, we shall not feel at a loss to account for the origin and design of the *Easter fire*. The "Lustrationes per Ignem" were, with the Romans, a sort of expiatory sacrifice, offered, in deprecation and atonement to an offended Deity, and resting upon the maxim that "fire purifies." Moses himself prohibited the Jews (Deuteron. xviii. 10.) from making their sons or daughters pass through the fire as a means of purification*; and Pliny tells us the reverence for this element was carried so far among the Romans, that the Hirpi, in consideration of their skill in passing over ignited piles of wood, were absolved by the senate from military service, and endowed with other exclusive immunities†. And again, if by any neglect the fire sacred to Vesta became extinguished, we are told by Festus and Plutarch that the bowl, being filled with tinder, sulphur, and other combustible materials, was exposed in a certain direction before the sun, until its concentrated rays ignited the contents. It would be curious to trace in how far the holy lamp used in Catholic churches is the offspring of "*Vestal fire*;" however, this at least appears evident, that the igneous superstitions common to *Paganism*, imperceptibly crept into *Christian* observance. And these superstitions must have made a violent inroad among our Christian predecessors, since it became necessary for the Sixth General Assembly of the Church, which was held in the year 680, under Constantine Pogonatus, to prohibit "the practice of lighting fires in front of the houses or shops, and leaping over them at the time of the new moon."

* Some idea of the cruel observance of this rite may be gathered from Sonnerat's account of the "Feast of Fire" in honour of Durma Rajah.

† Hist. Nat. viii. 2.

The *Easter fire* in particular, which has not fallen into disuse even in our own time in some parts of the south of Germany, is probably of Pagan origin: and its institution, like that of so many other of the corruptions which disfigured the primitive churches, seems not to have been altogether foreign to sound policy: for "the most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves, that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity*." The old chronicles record a two-fold celebration of the *Easter fire*: the one held within, and the other outside of, the sacred edifice. Some particulars of the first may be gleaned from a letter written by Pope Zacharry to Boniface, archbishop of Mentz: wherein the pontiff says, in allusion to this ceremony, "As to your enquiry about the Easter fire, let it serve for answer, that this thing has been ordained by the Holy Fathers ever since the time when, by the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and with his dear blood, the fifth Easter day was instituted, on which the holy ointment is consecrated. Three large lamps, in which the oil shall be collected from others in the church, shall unfailingly burn in a secret spot, as well as in the sanctuary, and oil be poured into them, such as shall suffice until the third day. From these lights shall *the fire required for baptism on the Holy Sunday* be renewed†." Leo the Fourth left this ordinance unaltered; merely adding to the *Cura Pastorali*, that on Easter day the old fire should be extinguished, a new one consecrated, and distributed among the people. This usage seems unquestionably to be derived from a Roman prototype: for the everlasting Vestal fire (as it was called) was annually put out in the month of March, and a fresh one kindled by means of the solar rays. The fire was distributed to the Christian congregation through the medium of

* Gibbon's Decl. and Fall, vol. v. c. xxviii.

what were denominated "Easter Tapers," to which a God was attached, designating the number of the new year then celebrated, as computed from the period of the sufferings and death of Christ. The *new* year, it should be observed, commenced at the feast of Easter among the earlier Christians, in the same way as it began the holy year with the Israelites.

The great *exterior* fire was subsequently instituted in commemoration of the resurrection of our Saviour, as the light of the world: and this ceremony consists in the lighting of a bonfire upon an adjoining eminence or mountain, on the first day of Easter. The people are encamped around the fire: the younger classes jump over it, and as it burns out, every one carries a stake from it home with him, as a certain talisman against the effects of lightning. It was the custom of the Western Church, under the ordinance of Constantine the Great, to celebrate the chanting of the vigils of Easter Eve, accompanied by the splendour of immense wax tapers, which Eusebius* calls "waxen pillars:" and the whole city of Constantinople was illuminated by thousands of lamps throughout the night.

On Easter Eve it was usual for the Jews also to make a bonfire in the open air, into which all leavened bread was cast, with the following formula: "All leavene, which I have seen or not seen, and which I have wholly expelled or not expelled from under my roof, shall henceforth be scattered out, destroyed, and be as nought but dust of the earth." And they grounded this custom on Exodus xii. v. 10. though this text has reference only to the paschal lamb.

In respect to the origin of *Easter fire*, we may still be permitted to add that Timeus, a Lutheran clergyman, would derive it from the Old Testament, 2 Kings, c. xxiii. where Josiah orders all the idols, altars, groves, &c. which the Jews had used in worshipping Baal and other false gods, to be destroyed; and thereupon celebrates the Passover. Josiah's example was followed by Christians, prior to his extirpation of the Saxon Idols, which was succeeded by the celebration of Easter; when the people assembled round an immense fire, made in commemoration of the destruction of Pagan worship, sang hymns in remembrance of our Saviour's resurrection, and then bent their steps homewards in Christian soberness and peace.

* Vita Const. iv. c. 22.

A RUSTIC D'EON.

THE following is a detailed account of a female who was detected lately in man's dress, acting as a plasterer at Glasgow:—

She belonged originally to Saltcoats, is now about 27 years of age, and for better than four years she has, of her own free choice, worn the attire and discharged the laborious duties of one of the male sex. Her real name is Helen Oliver; but she has assumed the name of her brother John. About six years ago, while she was a maid servant in a farm house in West Kilbridge, a particular intimacy took place between her and a person in the neighbouring house, who officiated as ploughman. Being frequently seen walking together in quiet and sequestered places, they were regarded as lovers; ultimately, however, this "ploughman" turned out to be also a female; and it is believed by Helen's relatives and acquaintances, that it was the arguments of this personage which induced her to abandon the female dress and duty. Upon Sunday the 4th January, 1818, while in her parents' house, at Saltcoats, she requested her mother to give her "we cutty pipe," and she would give her two new ones in exchange. To this unusual demand her mother, after some questions, consented; and Helen immediately afterwards began to write a letter, which, in answer to an inquiry from her parent, she said was to inform the people at Greenock, to whom she was hired as a servant, that she would not be with them for some time, for several reasons she then

alleged. Early on the following morning, Helen helped herself to a complete set of her brother's clothes, and disappeared, without giving the least intimation of her future prospects, or where she intended to fix her residence. Dressed in her new attire, she reached the house of a cousin in Glasgow, on the same day. Her relative was not sufficiently intimate with the person of the fair impostor to detect the fraud. Never doubting in the least that she was "the real John Oliver," among other inquiries for absent relatives, "sister Helen!" was not forgotten. A plasterer stopped at the time in her cousin's house, and she resolved to learn that business. Accordingly she went for trial to a person in the Calton; but having fallen out with her master, she left the town. She then went to Paisley, where she wrought for about three months, and she was next employed for about half a year in Johnstone. There, either for amusement, or to prevent suspicion, and ensure concealment, she courted a young woman, and absolutely carried the joke so far as to induce the girl to leave her service to be married. Travelling one night between Johnstone and Paisley, she was accosted by a lad from Saltcoats, who was intimate with her person, parents, and history; and in consequence she removed to Kilmarnock, where she remained six months. Besides the places already mentioned, she has been in Lanark and Edinburgh, working always at the plastering, except a short time she was employed by a Glasgow flesher about the Bell Street Market.

A variety of circumstances have frequently impelled this rustic D'Eon to change not only her master and house of residence, but also the town in which she was comfortably employed, particularly as she was often, or rather almost always, obliged to board and share her lodgings with some neighbour workman, and though, for obvious reasons, she seldom detailed more of her previous history than mentioning the towns she had visited and the masters she had served, yet some segacious females have been known to declare that "Johnnie must have been either a sodger or a sailor," because "when he likes himsel' he can brawly clout his breeks, darn his stockings, mak' his ain meat, and wash his ain claise."

At the beginning of February last, Helen applied for employment to a master plasterer in Hutchesontown. She said she was seventeen years of age, and stated that she and a sister were left orphans at an early age; urged her forlorn condition, and that having already had some practice, she was very anxious to be bound an apprentice, that she might obtain an ample knowledge of the business. Eventually she was employed, and though she had the appearance of a little man, she was in reality a tall woman, being about five feet four inches high. By no means shy of a hit, times without number she has carried the heavy hod full of lime for the Irish labourer in attendance. Steady, diligent, and quiet, she gave her master every satisfaction, and he, considering her rather a delicate boy, feelingly kept her at light ornamental work, and paid her 7s. a week. Some time since a workman was employed by the same master, to whom Helen was intimately known. The master having learned the facts of the case, placed her apart from the other men, and took a favourable opportunity to speak with her. She indignantly denied her metamorphosis, offered to produce letters from her sister, declared that she was a Freemason, and besides had been a flesher, a drummer in the Greenock volunteers, and made a number of statements with a view to escape detection. Last week an Irishman, with characteristic confidence, sprang upon the heroine, hugged her like a brother bruin, and cried in his genuine Doric, "Johnny, they tell me you're a woman, and dang it, I mane to know, for I have a pruty girl." The agile female extricated herself in an instant, and with a powerful kick drove him from her—at the same time exclaiming, with an

oath, she would soon convince him she was not a woman. Ultimately, however, the truth was wrung from her, and she has consequently left the town. She writes a good hand, and previous to her departure, she addressed a card to her master, in which she bade him farewell, and requested him not to make much talk about "ll. Oliver."

VARIETIES.

Spinage.—Mr. Phillips has discovered a marine plant, which he considers a true species of spinage, growing on the beach between Worthing and Lancing, in Sussex, the leaves of which are as thick as those of cabbage, and the flavour very superior to the common spinage; yet it is neglected by the neighbouring inhabitants, and suffered to wither on the shore, either through ignorance of its quality, or their fear of eating any herb that has not found its way into either the market or the garden. As it is a perennial, it cannot fail of being a valuable addition to the gardens of those who have residences near the sea. It should be sown on a heap of decayed sea-weed, covered with large gravel or small flints. The root is of the tap kind, but often branches among the stones on the beach; it is sweeter than even the carrot. The flowers are formed of five petals of a pale green colour, but of so solid a nature that when expanded they cannot be closed without breaking; but to counteract this apparent inconvenience, and to secure the pollen from the weather, to which from its natural situation it is particularly exposed, each petal forms a kind of hood, under whose roof the chives thrust their fecundating heads, until the stigma is sufficiently matured to receive the farina, when the chives, by bending to a quarter circle, extricate their loaded balls for the purpose of impregnation. The stigma is solitary, and slightly cut in three at the top. Its blossoms, which may be found in the months of August and September, are worth the inspection of the curious, who will see in them that nothing in nature is too minute to be perfectly formed, and suited for its situation and securing in producing its species.

Indication of the Temperature of a Room by two Thermometers at different altitudes.—Mr. John Murray has been induced, from some accidental observations, to make a series of experiments on the difference of temperature indicated by two thermometers at different altitudes, though, otherwise, under similar circumstances, and was surprised to find, that there existed an invariable difference between the temperature indicated by each, which he is inclined to consider to be an accurate guide for judging of the state of the weather. He placed one of the thermometers, with its ball on the floor, and the other he suspended 6½ feet above the former. When the difference between the two exceeded 2°, to 2° 5°—the weather was variable and wet."

POETRY.

A LANDSCAPE.

(From Bernard Barton's "Napoleon," and other Poems.)

Come, take thy stand upon this gentle ridge,
Which overlooks you sweet secluded vale;
Before us is a rude and rustic bridge,
A simple plank, and by its side a rail
On either hand, to guide the footsteps frail
Of first or second childhood; while below
The murmuring brooklet tells its babbling tale,
Like a sweet under-song, which, in its flow,
It chanteth to the flowers that on its margin grow.

For many a flow'ret blossoms there to bless
The gentle loveliness whose charms unloose
Its border—strawberry of the wilderness;
The snowdrop dewy, violet brightly blue;
Pale primrose, in whose cup the pearly dew
Glistens till noon-tide's lazy wind, listless hour;
And last of all, and sweetest to the view,
The lily of the vale, whose virgin flower
Trembles at every breeze within its lowly bower.

Now glance thine eye along the streamlet's banks
Up through yon quiet valley, thou will trace
Above, the giant mountains in their ranks,
Of bold and varied outline; little space
Below to air summits, far above them have,
Umbrageous woods; and, last of all, thine eye
Will rest on many an humble dwelling place
Of happy human beings, and descry
The lowly temple where they worship the Most High.

How quietly it stands within the bound
Of its low wall of grey, and mossy stone!
And like a shepherd's peaceful fold around
Its guardian gather'd,—graves, or tombs below strown.
Make *these* the last narrow resting places known,
Who, living, lov'd it as a holy spot;
And, dying, made their deep affections show
By wishing here to sleep when life was not
That mutual tie, or stone, might keep them undespoil'd.

It is a bright and balmy afternoon,
Approaching autumn's evening; all is still
In earth or air, that seems but's placid tone,
Or hum of bee, or lone wood-pigeon's coo,
Buried amid embow'ring forest full,
Which fester, half way up, each hill's steep sides
Dear thing to me is such landscape's soothing thrall!

And wish, if not within its bowers t' abide,
At least to explore its haunts, and know
What joys they hide!

Nor need'st thou wish a truer luxury
Than in its depths, delighted, thou mightst view,
I will not say that mouth of misery,
How sad it is, at times may harbour there,
The man of form to suffer and to bear—
But could I go with thee from cot to cot,
And show thee how this valley's inmates fare,
Thou might'st confess, to live in such a spot,
And there to end old age, were no unlucky lot.

THE GRAVE

I wander'd near it, and those eyes are nigh,
Whose gentle beam first chas'd away
And then the tears, with a first sigh,
Sorrow'd o'er the grassy grave.

It seem'd a mournful music, sweet
To solitude usually hear;
Sad though it be, it is more sweet
Than mute grief's leisure's bower.

I know not why it should be sad,
Or seem a horizontal tone,
Unless by man the spot be clad
With shades and flowers.

To mourn it seems not as dear
As even a more cheerful strain;
The air is more mighty where we clear,
The sun seems all the more bright.

[illegible]
[illegible]
Now [illegible]

"Ay! for whom [illegible] there sleeps
Of inanimate mouldering clay,
This loathsome earth-worm winds and creeps,
And I was to it from away."

And what of that? The frame that feels
The spirit true below,
As little of their banquet heeds,
As of the winds that blow